

not surprising that after four years of his second turn of this, he should, in 1928, have felt the strain felt that he had endured the uncongenial and ineffective long enough. He determined—and rightly—that neither Westminster nor Whitehall was his sphere.

"The explanation is simply that I shall be seventy when the Election occurs. Being in Parliament is not my life, it has only been an episode. I only went in under compulsion six years ago. I am now feeling the strain of it. The hours are very long. You begin often at eleven o'clock on Committee-work, and have to stay until eleven or eleven-thirty. It is too much for me, and in two years' time, it will be very much too much for me. I am giving notice to my constituents in good time.

Parliament is much more trying than it was years ago. The work was then left to perhaps a score of leaders on either side. Now, everybody takes a hand. I have other things to do. My wife and I have other books to write. You cannot do that and do the House of Commons as well. I am not going to give up my work. I think that in the new parliament there will be a very narrow majority either way, and that will mean very much more incessant attendance. I cannot face that. There are only about six members of the House of Commons who are older than I am. Parliament has become too heavy a job for people who do not enter reasonably young and take it up as the work of their life. I went in at the age of sixty-three, and that is a little too late to alter one's habits."

No need to quarrel with his own calm verdict. He was not an outstanding success, either as a Minister or as an M.P. He never fully "pulled his weight" in the corporate life which is the substantive opportunity of Westminster, nor, despite a few admirable dissertations on a few issues that keenly interested him, did he shine in the

Chamber He
took up the new life too late Had he entered
the House of
Commons when he went on to the London
County Council,
young, adaptable, full of vigour and resource,
he might have
proved as effective in national as in local
government as
effective, above all, at the Cabinet table, and in
the administrative sphere As it was, a good, if uninspired,
President of